

Case Study

Agricultural Development & Advisory Service (ADAS) – local profile raising

Introduction

Cutbacks in government funding led to a major requirement for the Agricultural Development & Advisory Service (ADAS) to increase sales of its livestock and arable advisory services throughout the UK farming community. To support this drive, the organisation's Midlands and Western Region wanted to raise its local profile quite substantially, making farmers more aware of key staff and particular services available from the organisation.

Objectives

- Raise the local profile of ADAS among farmers in the Midlands and West of England
- Raise farmers' awareness of ADAS key staff and available services.

Strategy

A series of editorial columns was established in the region's most important farming magazines and local newspaper farming pages. These columns featured local ADAS advisers and provided timely information and tips on key livestock and arable issues linked to ADAS services.

Following discussions with the region's three main advisory teams, Mistral prepared and approved six core articles. These were 'personalised' to each of 17 local staff advisers and provided to their respective media, with suitable pictures, as a series which was pre-sold to a total of 20 separate titles spanning the region.

Mistral surveyed farmers' attitudes to, and knowledge of, local ADAS services and staff before and after the campaign at the region's three main cattle markets. ADAS advisers were also surveyed following the project to gauge their opinions.

Results

All six articles were widely published in the target media, most at feature length, and accompanied by pictures of their local ADAS adviser. On average, each publication used four of the six items provided, which resulted in a total of 80 main pieces of coverage in the campaign's six-month period.

60 per cent of the 230 farmers surveyed after the campaign confirmed they had noticed the articles; 20 per cent said they were more aware of their local advisers as a result; and a further 20 per cent confirmed they would be more likely to call ADAS for advice than before the campaign.

Amongst the 23 advisers surveyed, nearly 75 per cent reported a response from farmers as a result of the campaign, with a significant number reporting new farmer contacts and service contracts directly attributable to it.

